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CILA News: Honoring Foundation Builders

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CILA News: Honoring Foundation Builders

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CILA lost three of its strongest supporters who went to be with the Lord during 2011. We had an opportunity to pay tribute to them as part of our conference program on June 13, 2012, and would like to highlight for all ACL members how special these ladies were and how much they contributed to the growth and development of the Commission for International Library Advancement.

Lois J. Lehman and Dr. Eva L. Kiewitt



Those who knew them will always think of Lois and Eva together, as they shared a home and served together both at the Regent University Library and in CILA. They were both born in Indiana and then served overseas early in their careers, Lois in Sierra Leone and Eva in Germany. Later they returned to work at Indiana University.

In 1980, Lois was appointed Dean of the Library at then CBN University (later Regent), which was just two years old at the time. She

invited Eva to join her as Associate Dean the following year. Their legacy at Regent includes the design of the current library building, built in 1983, and many technological advances such as the conversion to the Innovative Interfaces library system in 1993.

Lois and Eva joined ACL soon after starting at Regent, and quickly became actively involved. Their many contributions to the Association were recognized when they were given the Emily Russel Award together in 1997.

When they retired from Regent in 1994, they wondered what they would do with their free time, and soon found their niche in CILA. It was not long before they were appointed to leadership positions, Eva as CILA Team Coordinator in 1995–2001, and Lois as CILA General Secretary in 1996–2000. Many ACL members still think of those years as CILA’s “Golden Age,” due to their effective leadership and the successful projects that they carried out.

Their most significant contribution was the writing in 1996 of a training syllabus to be used with the 1994 edition of *The Librarian’s Manual*. They also developed a set of guidelines for planning overseas training seminars. These resources were first used in a CILA seminar held in Jamaica in 1996, and continue to be used by individuals and teams to this day.

I had the privilege of serving with both Lois and Eva in a training seminar held in Trinidad in 1997, and will always appreciate everything I learned from them. I especially remember the team meetings held every evening, in which we reviewed the activities of the day and discussed suggestions for improvement that we could make to future teams. As I later had opportunities to participate in other teams and eventually became a leader myself, I have frequently found myself thinking back to what I learned from Lois and Eva, both in terms of their teaching methods and knowledge of international library work, and especially their example of godliness and

dependence on the Lord. All of us who began our service with CILA under their leadership owe much to the foundation they laid, as we attempt to follow in their footsteps.

Dorothy K. Spidell

Long before Lois and Eva led CILA in the projects it is best known for, and before CILA even existed in its present form, Dorothy Spidell was encouraging librarians to get involved internationally. Dorothy was one of ACL's five "founding mothers," having organized the first meeting of the Christian Librarians' Fellowship in 1956, while at Nyack Missionary College. Over the years, she frequently made trips to assist libraries in a number of different countries, including the Philippines, India, France, Spain, Kenya, Costa Rica, and Egypt.

One of Dorothy's biggest contributions to future CILA projects came in 1990, when she tested portions of the then incomplete Librarian's Manual in the first ACL-sponsored training seminar. Dorothy Bowen, who was a member of her team, had this to say about her experience:

In 1990 there was a message on the ACL list from Dorothy Spidell, asking for volunteers to join her in Bangkok, Thailand to conduct a workshop for librarians from around Asia. I was working in Kenya at the time. I wrote that I was interested but did not have the funding. Dorothy responded that if I was willing to teach in the workshop she would assist with my funding. The workshop was 6 weeks long and I participated for 3 of those weeks.

The workshop was held at the Bangkok Bible College and our hostess was ACL member Rex Jeng. The guest teachers in the workshop included Dorothy Spidell, Vihari Hivale and myself. Participants came from several Asian countries and entered into the workshop with great enthusiasm. Not only did we cover the topics of collection development, cataloging, reference, etc., but we also visited libraries in the area.

Dorothy Spidell had done an excellent job on preparing for the conference, including raising funding to house and feed visitors.

She had been in Thailand before and was very aware of what was needed. She organized another conference for 1991 in which I also participated.

My life was enriched both professionally and personally through having known Dorothy Spidell.

Those who knew Dorothy remember her joy of serving and the way that she inspired others to follow her example. At the June 2012 conference, we were amazed and excited to learn that she had left \$100,000 to CILA in her will. Her legacy will enable CILA to do more than we ever dreamed possible to assist the international libraries that she loved. We hope to live up to the challenge that she presented on ACL's 25th anniversary:

Librarians can be missionaries too, and ACL is involved in missions. The accomplishments of the past are commendable; but who of us is going to answer the urgency of these requests from mission boards, and more importantly, who of us will obey the mandate, "Librarians, go ye!"

Let me quote Lillian Dickinson, that indomitable missionary to Taiwan, who said, "A knowledge of the need is a call of God."

As in the past, I believe that ACL members, being aware of these opportunities, will make themselves available to God for overseas library service.¹

Will you join in following the example of Lois, Eva, and Dorothy and building on the foundation that they laid? What can YOU do to serve Christian libraries and librarians in need of assistance? ✝



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¹ Spidell, D. K. (1982) Association of Christian Librarians and missions. *The Christian Librarian*, 25(3, 4), 83.

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